



Give Your Kids *a Boost!*

New York State law requires children ages 4, 5, and 6 to be properly buckled up. Children who weigh less than 40 pounds should use child safety seats and more than 40 pounds booster seats with a lap and shoulder belt.

Know the F A C T S About Booster Seats

F A C T : Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of unintentional injuries and deaths for children 4 to 8 years of age.

F A C T : Most crashes occur close to home (within 25 miles). A crash can happen when you least expect it, so it is important for everyone to buckle up every time they ride in a vehicle.

F A C T : Most crashes occur at speeds of less than 30 mph. Severe injury can happen even at low speeds. Properly installed child safety seats and booster seats can help save a child's life.

F A C T : Children aged 2 to 5 who use adult seat belts are more likely to be severely injured and suffer head injury than children the same age who use child safety seats or booster seats.

F A C T : Children up to the age of four should use child safety seats until they reach the seat's upper weight or height limit. At approximately age four, children should begin to use a booster seat with a lap and shoulder belt until they are 4'9" tall.

Why **USE** a booster seat?

To protect your child and it's the law!

Parents often believe that children are big enough to use seat belts when they are too heavy (generally over 40 pounds) or tall (shoulders above the top harness slots) for a convertible or traditional child safety seat.

But seat belts are designed to fit adults, not children. Young children who use only seat belts, rather than booster seats or child safety seats, are more likely to suffer life-threatening injuries, including severe damage to the brain, spleen, liver and spinal cord.

Booster seats are recommended for children who are between the ages of 4 and 8, weigh over 40 pounds and under 4'9" tall. Most children in this age group are not big enough to fit into vehicle lap and shoulder belts properly without a booster seat. A booster seat helps the lap and shoulder belts fit properly by raising the child up to an adult's sitting height.

The shoulder belt should go over the middle of the shoulder and the lap belt should be low and snug over the top of the thighs, not over the stomach. If needed, the shoulder belt can be adjusted by using a guide provided by the booster seat manufacturer that can either be attached to a no-back booster seat or located on the side of a high back booster seat.

The next time you put your child in the car, try this simple test:



- ❓ Does your child sit all the way back against the back seat?
- ❓ Do your child's knees bend comfortably over the edge of the back seat?
- ❓ Does the shoulder belt cross your child's shoulder between the neck and arm?
- ❓ Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
- ❓ Can your child stay seated like this for an entire trip?

If you answer "no" to any of these questions, your child needs a booster seat to ride safely in the car.

Benefits of booster seats

In addition to preventing needless motor vehicle-related injuries in children, there are other benefits to using booster seats, such as:

Convenience: Booster seats are typically lightweight and can be easily switched from one car to another with little effort.

Easy to Use: Since booster seats are used with the vehicle lap and shoulder belts, children enjoy buckling up themselves when riding in a car.

Affordability: The cost of a booster seat can range between \$20 and \$100. Since a child will use a booster seat for about four years, the cost of protection is minimal.

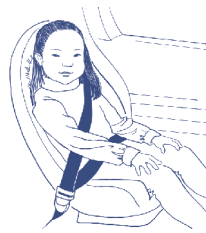
Availability: You can easily find booster seats at most discount chain stores, baby product stores or child safety product web sites.

Children Enjoy the Ride: Many children like using booster seats because they can see out of the window better than when using just the seat belts.

Comfort: Booster seats correctly position the lap and shoulder belt for a safer and more comfortable ride.

There are different types of booster seats

The type of seat you need depends upon your car and where the seat belts are attached to the vehicle seat, as well as the height and weight of your child. All booster seats must be used with a lap and shoulder belt and should be used in the back seat of your car. To protect the head and neck, the child's ears should be at or below the top of the vehicle seat, booster seat or headrest.



A high back booster seat must be used when the vehicle's back seat is lower than the child's ears, but can also be used in vehicles with higher back seats. The high back of the booster seat helps protect the child's neck and head. Side head supports can also provide additional comfort for a sleeping child.

Two types of high back booster seats are available. One is equipped with a harness that changes from a forward-facing toddler seat to a booster seat by simply removing the harness and using the vehicle's lap/shoulder belt. The other type of high back booster seat does not have a harness and is only used with the lap/shoulder belt.

Backless booster seats are the least costly. They, too, must be used with the lap and shoulder belt. This seat should be used if the child's ears are below the vehicle seat or there is a headrest.



If your vehicle does not have shoulder belts in the back seat, a booster seat cannot be used. Check with your vehicle dealership or contact SafetyBeltSafe USA at www.carseat.org to see if shoulder belts can be installed in the side seating positions. If a retrofit kit is not available consider using a travel vest or child safety seats with a higher weight limit to keep your child properly secured.

How do you choose a booster seat?

- Find out whether the seat belts and seat in your car can best support a high back booster seat, backless booster seat or other type of child safety restraint.
- Read the booster seat instructions and your car owner's manual before installing the booster seat.
- Try the booster seat in your car with your child as soon as you purchase it. Be sure it can be installed and used correctly.
- Never use a booster seat that has been in a crash or purchase a used booster seat. The seat may have defects that are not visible.
- Complete and return the product registration card to be notified if the booster seat is recalled.

For more information on booster seats, contact:

New York State Governor's Traffic Safety Committee

(518) 474-5111 • www.safeny.org

National Highway Safety Administration

1-888-347-4236 • www.nhtsa.dot.org

National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

(770) 488-4506 • www.cdc.gov/ncipc

SafetyBeltSafe USA

1-800-745-SAFE • www.carseat.org

NYS DOH Bureau of Injury Prevention

(518)473-1143 • www.health.state.ny.us



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